



RANDY WEBER
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
FOURTEENTH DISTRICT, TEXAS

May 10, 2017

Ryan Jackson
Chairman
Regulatory Reform Task Force
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Jackson:

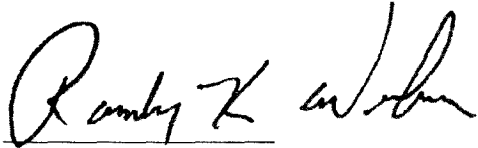
While we applaud the work your task force is doing to reduce the regulatory and administrative burden on the economy, we encourage you to consider changes to the rules promulgated by the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the ocean disposal of dredged material. The environmental objective of the regulations may be achieved with fewer requirements and a more streamlined process.

Due to naturally-occurring sediment build-up, many private industrial port facilities, particularly those on the U.S. Gulf Coast, must dredge their ship basins on an annual or periodic basis in order to keep such basins operational. With an increasingly-limited number of available onshore disposal sites operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the need for private industry to find a dependable home for such dredged material is becoming paramount. In many locations, EPA designated offshore disposal sites for dredged material to alleviate the capacity constraints of onshore disposal sites, but the bureaucratic process for permission to utilize these sites is lengthy, cumbersome, costly and uncertain.

Currently, the ocean disposal of dredged material is regulated by the EPA to ensure that the deposited sediment does not contaminate the waters or have other adverse environmental impacts. However, the rules are imprecise, creating inconsistent interpretation and implementation, as well as a lack of certainty for private industry working to comply with the requirements. For example, the EPA currently has the authority to request "any additional information" on a permit request, which is too open-ended and too broad. In addition, the scope of "minor" maintenance is not defined, and the criteria of environmental impacts is not clear. Modest changes to the rules would establish better guidance to the agency, provide relief to the regulated community, and maintain the goal of ensuring that the disposal of this material is not environmentally-damaging.

In your effort to find duplicative and unnecessary regulations and policies, we bring your attention to this specific problem, and urge you to consider amending the rules in a way that can make them more efficient, more effective and more predictable.

Sincerely,



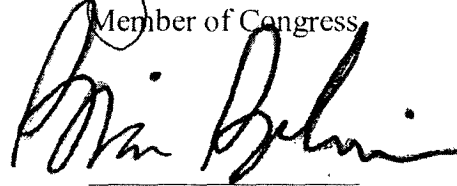
Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress



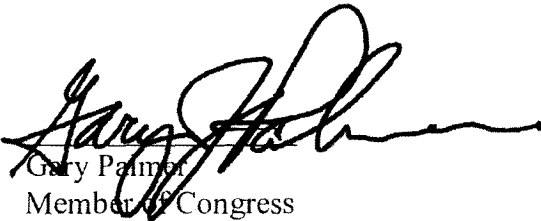
John Culberson
Member of Congress



Blake Farenthold
Member of Congress



Brian Babin
Member of Congress



Gary Palmer
Member of Congress



Daniel Webster
Member of Congress